

Personal

Lagos, Nigeria; November 6, 1942

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Dear Mr. Jester:

Thank you very much indeed for the letter you wrote me on the back of one of Philinda's making suggestions about her travel out here. You have been very kind and helpful from the beginning, and both of us appreciate more than we can say your many helpful ideas.

Yesterday Mr. Shantz telegraphed the Department (No. 218, Nov. 5, 5 p.m.) recommending, among other things, that Philinda be appointed here instead of Miss Johnson, in view of the housing situation. I did not suggest this to him, although I am sure Mr. Erhardt will think that I pestered him until he finally consented to do it. He thought of it himself, and was prompted by the fact that Mr. Browne does not seem to feel that Miss Johnson is temperamentally suited to life in this part of the world, and he further says that, at least on his last contact with her, she did not know stenography. Under those circumstances, I do not see that she would be any better for the office than Philinda; on the ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> hand, I appreciate the Department's reluctance to send out a girl whom they know is planning to marry an officer, especially if there is any possibility of getting another person. Although I am not optimistic, I hope that you will do what you can to push the project.

According to the last letter I received from Philinda, she is planning to sail for Lisbon on a Portuguese ship about the end of November. From there, she will go either to Bolama or Loanda. Jesse Boynton assures me there would be space on a Clipper to take her from Bolama to Fisherman's Lake, as it is a short hop, and, in spite of the Army's rigid new control over what used to be PAA-Africa, I think she will be able to get from Fish Lake here. Browne has already been informed of the situation and will do what he can in Accra.

If she goes through Loanda, she will have to hire a car from there to Matadi, and from there on, the sailing would be reasonably smooth. The advantage of this route is that we have Consulates in most of the places where she can go for assistance and advice. I think I can wangle a plane passage for her up from Leo all right. It is always easier west-bound than east-bound.



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Early in the game we considered Philinda's going to Natal and taking her chances from there, but we found that she could not leave the United States without priority in this direction. I was disappointed that Mr. Finch could not get her on one of the Norwegian vessels bound for Takoradi which make the trip in such good time. They are considered practically safe. But apparently Finch is bound hand and foot by the War Shipping Administration, and could do nothing. I hear Anita is getting close, but she hasn't arrived yet. On the whole, next to air travel, I prefer to have Philinda travel by a neutral vessel, even though the route is very circuitous and the trip is going to set me back about four years' savings.

Jesse wrote long ago to his chief in New York recommending Philinda be given a job with the Atlantic Division here, but so far we have heard nothing. I think I would prefer to have her work for Pan American rather than the Consulate, as it would be better for office discipline. Besides, she has had more experience with that line of work, although of course she did work in the Consulate General at Lisbon for several months, and I know she would be very useful here.

Life in Lagos goes on much the same. Mac and I go out a good deal and have people in frequently, although we don't do <sup>much</sup> in the way of formal entertaining. Either the work is falling off, or else I don't notice it so much because we now have an adequate staff. Just think - I haven't decoded a telegram since I left Accra, on August 26th! Incidentally, my detail to Accra was most interesting and worth-while. I got to know a few of the people at the camp, but they change so often it is hard to keep up with what goes on. Of course, I did not find it too easy to get along with Andy, as he is very overbearing at times, but on the whole it was a satisfactory event. However, I was very glad to get back to Lagos after Altaffer arrived.

Mac and John Burlison are not satisfied that they are doing their best towards the war effort here, and both are talking about resigning. I hope I am not lacking in patriotism, but I feel that, after four years of training, I am probably more useful to the country in the Service than I would be as an untrained, inexperienced army recruit. My qualifications are on file in Washington, and if they think I can be more useful in any other sphere, I will be glad to do what they say. The war is a big thing, and everybody cannot be in the firing line, or do spectacular work. There are going to be plenty of army men acting as airport clerks, etc., around here, and I think I can contribute as much as they can in my present job.

Once again, many thanks for all you have done for us.  
Very warmest regards to you and Mrs. Jester.

Sincerely,